

Letter to Residents

From the Office of the City Manager

[Sugar Land Today | Winter 2013 Issue](#)

On a recent trip to Boston, I was struck at how modern—and yet how historical—this American city is. Not only can you use a mobile app to navigate the subway, but you can also attend a baseball game in a stadium that opened in 1912 and visit the house from which Paul Revere set off on his famous midnight ride over 200 years ago. Remarkably, Bostonians have found a way to ensure their city endures—not for years, but for centuries—building a modern economic infrastructure earning the city recognition as one of the top technology and innovation hubs in the country without sacrificing their revolutionary history.

As a suburb, Sugar Land is vastly different from the metropolis of Boston, but I think we can still learn a lot from their experience—particularly, how do we preserve the character of our city while also adapting to the changing realities in the world around us?

Sugar Land residents have established a robust vision for the future of our community which is included in the City's Comprehensive Plan: a safe, beautiful, inclusive and environmentally responsible community that has great neighborhoods and outstanding cultural, educational and recreational opportunities; a regional business center of excellence with balanced development and redevelopment and a city in which residents take pride. To be successful at achieving this vision, we must continually incorporate it into our daily operations and ensure all of our planning documents are in alignment.

With that said, it is now time for us to update our Land Use Plan which documents the land use policies that guide development within the City. In addition to better aligning it with the vision, we would also like to engage the community in considering many of the changing realities identified since the plan was last updated in 2004—such as shifts in demographics, evolving economic development practices, new mobility patterns and an increased desire among residents for creative destinations and housing choices.

Therefore, I would like to invite all residents to take part in a special six-part Land Use Forum beginning in early 2014. The forum will be open to the public and feature renowned speakers and extensive community discussions. Residents will have the opportunity to explore a variety of topics, such as the impact of changing demographics on market trends and the benefits of mixed-use activity centers—both in terms of attracting employers and providing recreation and retail opportunities, the link between mobility and land use, the role of housing choices in a community and how a city can remain vibrant through redevelopment.

Though these are complex topics, it is my hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to shape the future of our community. Just as Boston would not be the city it is today without their residents and leaders dreaming big and establishing a modern vision for their community, we know that an updated Land Use Plan will help ensure that Sugar Land remains a vibrant place to live, work, shop and play for years and decades to come.